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843 782 presentation of a piece of a broken cocoanut. Occasionally, particularly when the woman is in severe pain before the time her birth-pangs are expected and normal, there may be a special sacrifice of one of the animals noted above. Hindus also observe similar ceremonies.

843 789 There are certain charms which are believed to be useful to the expectant mother to ward off evil. A small metal box for the protecting *devi* is worn on a cotton thread round the neck, while a copper necklace is regarded as an especially effective protection. Sometimes the leaves [824] of the *tulasi* plant (*Ocymum sanctum*) are useful. Such leaves may be laid on the mother's abdomen with a prayer that she may be safeguarded through this dangerous period. These various means help in the prevention of miscarriage which, if it does occur, is believed to be due to the influence of some evil force. But even should a demon trip the woman up and cause her to fall heavily to the ground, no harm will result if these precautions have been attended to. When there is a case of miscarriage the foetus is taken away to the burial ground and put into a hole without any ceremony.

845 789 *Labour.* Among the more primitive Kols difficult labour is ascribed to evil spirits; the more advanced ones speak of it as a punishment due from Bhagawan for some bad *karma*. In case the delivery proves difficult there are certain things that should be done. Some Kols definitely averred that nothing can alter the difficulties of labour, but questions have been answered in such a way by others that it appears to be established that there are magical practices in this connection. If things are not going well the first thing to be done is to make a suitable offering to a *devi* or *deva*, or both. Then one should go carefully about the house and open the mouth of each covered earthen pot; the knots on every bundle should be carefully untied and strings or pieces of ropes untwisted. As far as possible every closed thing in the house should be opened up. This, it is believed, will make the delivery easier. Often five handfuls of rice are taken out of the opened rice jar and Bhagawan is challenged to divide the grains into two equal parts without making an error. They imply that if he can do such a thing and do it right he will surely be able to see the child safely through delivery.

844 787 Another magical use of grain is also made at this critical hour. Prayers are first offered for a safe delivery, then a handful of grain is taken out of the pot by a male member of the family. This is carefully counted. If it happens that the number of grains is even, then all will be well, for it is a good omen, and the delivery will be easy. If the number is an odd one, it is a warning of the likelihood of pain and danger.

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part of one, and if another person should get it he would have power over the child. Its burial is also, strangely, a proof of birth. If a Kol is asked where he was born he replies: "My *nara* is buried in...." and names the village. In a real sense a part of him is buried there and he is a part of that village. The spot is plastered over with a mixture of cow dung, earth and water, and the fire lit over it. The *hom* sacrifice may also be offered.

Any extraordinary happening at birth or anything unusual is generally considered a bad sign. For example, a child born with teeth already in its mouth is much feared, for it signifies bad luck and a member of the family, probably one of the parents, will be sure to die within a short time. They say the child has come to destroy a member of the family. An extra finger, though, is considered as a good omen. Twins seem to have no special significance attached to them and their occurrence appears to be infrequent among the Kols.

The Sixth Day Ceremony: *Chhatthi*. After six days it is believed that the greatest period of danger is over and the woman can begin to make preparations to take up her normal life. This period corresponds with the time of greatest physical danger, for by the sixth day after birth, the dreaded septicaemia, if it is to come, will make its appearance. When day has come and all is well the *dhobi* and the *nai* are usually sent for. The former takes all the soiled clothes. The wife, after a preliminary bath and anointing by the *dai*, puts on fresh clothes. The barber trims the nails of her hands and feet and puts vermilion on both her feet and the feet of her child so that no evil spirit may harm them as they make their way to the place of the ceremonial bath. Her head has been oiled with *til* oil and occasionally the child has been pricked on the stomach with a hot iron, so that "the waters may be digested". All the earthen vessels in the house should be thrown out and new ones purchased from the Kumhar, and the house should be cleaned and plastered. The *nai* also gives the male members of the family a good shave, both of the face and the head.

The mother is now ready for the ceremonial bath at the village bathing place. The women of the household go there in a group accompanied by a Basor beating a drum. This is done just at sundown. The mother carries a brass vessel (*lota*) on the top of which burns an earthenware lamp (*diya*). At the place of bathing offerings are made: cocoanut, *haldi*, *supari*. Incense may be sprinkled in the fire in the lamp. Mustard seed (*rai*) is often scattered about in order to frighten off any evil spirits which may be at the place ready to injure the mother and the child. There is then a formal sort of bath, the water being

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584 (a) *Negotiations.* If the girl's father, after enquiries, is fully satisfied the matter becomes one of real concern. The boy's father is informed of this and a day is set for him and his party of men (the boy and the women do not go and have no formal part) to go to the girl's house and start actual negotiations for the wedding since the matter is now no longer a secret. On the way to the girl's house this party 584 must be sure to take note of good or bad omens. If the latter are 787 frequent they may turn back and decide on a new start at a later hour or even on another day, if the omens have been particularly bad. To pass four people seated together is a good omen and to meet a Hindu *pandit* is another. But to meet a person with an empty vessel is a bad omen, as is also a meeting with a *teli* (oilman). A jackal about [825] to cross the road is a dangerous omen and one should make every attempt to head him off and to stop him from actually crossing the road. If it should occur, the best thing to do under the circumstances is to take a thorny branch, place it in the centre of the road at the point where the jackal crossed, put a heavy stone on top of the branch, and [789] with one foot planted on this stone roundly curse the beast. This will ward off the evil and save the person concerned from disaster.

It was noted that the groom-to-be does not accompany this party 584 nor does any female member of his family go to see the girl. The 574 party of men must take with them certain things, among them *dahi* (curds) kept in a new *markî* (earthenware vessel) which has been nicely whitewashed on the outside and has yellow symbols superimposed. The top is sealed with leaves and securely tied for it is eventually to be presented to the girl's father. They should also take *haldi* (turmeric, *Curcuma longa*) and *sendur* (vermilion). When the party arrives at the girl's village they are warmly greeted and brought to the house where the matter is formally discussed and much of the ground previously gone over privately is now publicly repeated. After a formal agreement has been reached by both parties the girl's father should ceremonially wash the feet of the boy's father, but another may do this if the father is unable to do so or is dead. This is a witness to 584 the fact that the matter is now settled and that the match is arranged. 583 The boy's father should at this time make payment of the first instalment of the price agreed upon in their discussions. The figure differs according to locality and is not uniform. It is divided into two parts, the first is paid on this visit and the balance just before the *sadi*. The following figures are typical, the first figure being the first payment: Rs. 8 and 4; 10-8-0 and 5-4-0; 9 and 4-8-0. The larger amount is paid first and half of it later. At Benda village it was claimed that there was no bargaining and that the price was fixed at

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764 nor measure it to see whether a spirit has gotten within and caused the body to swell. Other groups, such as the Chamars,[1] are said to do this. In Rewa it was reported that they should not wait till daylight, but should make immediate arrangements even though the work has [184] to be done at night. They said that if a man died about 9 p.m., they would have the corpse buried by 3 a.m. This, though, seems to be the exception and not the rule; other groups have denied this, saying that no burial ever occurs at night.

[493] TRANSPORTATION OF THE CORPSE. The body is transported to the burial or cremation grounds on the *talari* as noted above. The corpse is always carried by men. Among the Oraons it is said that the custom once was that the women always carried the corpse.[2] Four men at a time act as pall bearers. The men are frequently [578] changed so that as many as possible may assist. Even a man's "enemies" should come and help and if such a person does there will be no further enmity between him and the rest of the family. This will also appease the spirit of the deceased. The body is usually carried so that the feet go first. There is a division of opinion on this matter though, as some Kols claim that the head should always be kept in the [823] direction of the Ganges; hence in cases where the graveyard happens to be in the north of the village the head is carried forward. That the feet go first is generally true in other groups, in order, it is said, that the spirit of the deceased may not find its way back. But the [775] Kol has no objection to the spirit's return, and in fact expects it back; actually food is put out near the house for it. If the body is set down for a time the head should point north and the feet south.

On the way to the *masan* or *marghat* (burial place) or the *ghat* or *chita* (burning place) there should be no chanting nor singing nor music of any kind. Lamentation and weeping is all that is in order. The party goes in two groups, first the men with the bier, and, following a short distance behind, the women and the children. The women bring the water for washing the body as well as the oil and turmeric for anointing. As the party proceeds it is customary to drop some mustard seeds along the way, and *laddu* balls made with sweetened *lai* (puffed [787] rice) are also dropped at intervals. On the way back they try to see [775] if these have been picked up, and form an opinion as to whether the [776] omens are good or bad. Some say that if the spirit of the deceased returns he will pick them up. The *rai* seeds will keep the evil spirits

1 Briggs, G. W., *The Chamars*, pp. 100—101.
2 Roy, S. C., *Oraon Religion and Customs*, p. 173.

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776 778 782 worship. No image is found, but there are exceptions. In Rewa State it was said that she should be worshipped at least twice a year: two days before the *Dasara* festival (September-October) and eight days after Chaita (March-April).

While animal sacrifices are forbidden at the Maihar temple, they may still be offered at the village shrine.[1] One group said that a black [184] kid was the only acceptable offering, while from others it was learned that chickens, lambs and suckling pigs may all be sacrificed. The usual [787] vegetable offerings are likewise acceptable. She frequently possesses people and speaks through them.

Childless women, especially, should worship her and make offerings [842] and sacrifices, so that she may speak to them through the *panda* and tell them what to do before they can expect children. Shardamai is therefore [755] reverenced at this place by childless women. It is also claimed that she can restore sight and cause the blind to walk and is a general miracle worker.

776 785 During *Chaita*, the Hindu month corresponding to parts of March and April of the Christian calendar, there should be an evening fast to Shardamai covering nine days. Regular food may be taken only in the [805] morning, and the evening meal should be limited to water, milk and water-nuts called *singhara* the Water-caltrop (*Trapa bispinosa* or *natans*). [262] On the ninth day the big offering to Shardamai must be made. Before anyone may partake of the meal on the ninth evening, a cocoanut[2] must [782] first be broken before the village shrine and offered to her, and then the edible part distributed to those present. Thereafter regular meals may be taken. If possible someone from the village, or better yet several from the chief families should go to Maihar to worship. Their worship at Shardamai's temple and the worship at home will reinforce the bond of friendship which they must maintain.

Shivari or Sheori. Shivari is called the mother of all Kols and served 776 Rama during his exile and search for Sita and has thus become deified. Shivari is nearly always listed by Kols, nevertheless actual worship [778] of her is rare; but Kols talk of her temple somewhere in Rewa and also at Sheori-Narayan near Raipur, eastern Central Provinces. Stories concerning her are found in connection with the study of the origin of the Kols and in the chapter on legends.[3] She probably represents a tribal goddess.

[753] 782 *Sitalamai*. This name is a euphemistic title meaning the cool,

1 Kali worship is associated with animal sacrifice and Shardamai is probably equivalent to Durga in Hinduism.

2 Probably a relic of human sacrifice.

3 See pp. 8-10; also Chapter X.

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thread hung on the tree in which he is found. Animals are never sacrificed to him. One such tree, claimed to be the dwelling place of Barum *baba* was inspected, but there was no sign of offerings having been made there. As far as possible Kols avoid trees inhabited by him, particularly after dark.

In Rewa, Barum *baba* was said to be the spirit of a deceased Brahmin. Probably this is why the sacred thread is so acceptable to him as an offering and should be hung on the trees in which he resides.

Bas deo and Barum *deo* are probably the same in the thought of the Kol. These spirits prefer to live in the *bar* or Banyan tree, though they are reported as living in *pipal* trees as well. They are mostly thought of as vindictive and evil, but it is also said that they are somewhat afraid of people and that they try to please men if they can; it is good for man to get a vision of Bas *deo*.

Bhainsokhar, *Bhaino*, and *Bhainsasor* are all forms of the buffalo god or demon. Crooke has certain information in this connection.

> The Kols believe in Naga-era who occupies wells, tanks, and stagnant waters, the embodiment of malaria, and Garha-era, a water goddess, 'frequently and truly described as the cause of sickness, and propitiated with sacrifices to spare their victims' (from Dalton). Such spirits sometimes appear in the form of animals, like Bhainsasura, the buffalo demon akin to Mahishasura, with the same meaning, who gives its name to Mysore, the embodiment of death, like the black buffalo on which Yama, god of death, rides, which was slain by Durga, the life protecting goddess. They often show themselves in the shape of a turban which clings to the fisherman's hook and increases in size as he tries to drag it ashore or pulls him into the water—all impersonations of the vague awe and mystery of dark, still water pools. Hence they are special protectors of passengers at Ghats or fords.[1]

The Kols we interviewed are vague about this deity, but feel that the buffalo god is dangerous and ought to be propitiated. At Benda a shrine was found to him. A picture shows the white mound in the centre of a platform as his dwelling place.[2] The plants are *Tulasi*—the sacred basil.

Burha deo. This deity is probably the same as Bura *deo*, said to be the chief deity of the Gonds. While Kols know him, it appears that very little is actually done, other than that his name may be called at times of worship along with other lesser deities.

Dulha deo. The worship of Dulha *deo* or Dulha *baba* is widespread in Central India, and the Kols have much to do with him. He

1 Crooke, W., *Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 60.
2 See plate xxii.

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776 is the bridegroom deity. The general view is well summed up by Crooke:

> Strange, abnormal features of the scenery often become objects of veneration. In Mirzapur District there is a rock in the form of a hideous, grinning skull, with enormous teeth, known as Dantasdeo, 'the demon with the teeth'. ....The same feeling is illustrated by the cult of Dulhadeo, 'the bridegroom deity', which is widely spread from the Central Provinces up to the hills which rise above the valley of the Ganges. He is one of the deified spirits of men suddenly slain before their desires were accomplished, and like others of his kind he should have become a Bhut or malignant spirit. But he is now generally regarded as a friendly household godling. Stone pillars and rocks are often associated with his tragic fate.....[1]

A Kol at Barela insisted that Dulha *deo* was the supreme deity, but generally speaking he is regarded by the Kols as a beneficent household god. [778] He usually dwells within the house and a piece of stone placed in a notch in the wall and daubed with *sendur* indicates his presence. He is offered sacrifices at set seasons, but before each meal a little food should be put aside for him. If he is neglected and gets angry he may cause harm to the family. If he is to be venerated outside the house, a little mound of earth about eight inches high may be raised close to the wall of the house not far from the doorway. This is simply whitewashed and called Dulha *deo*.

776 782 Offerings made to him are much like those given to other deities. It is often said that he should never be offered a chicken. He prefers either a kid or suckling pig. His favourite time of worship is in the [805 Hindu month of *Kuwar*, (September-October). This is the time his ● 787 spirit possesses people and speaks through them.

[264 In Rewa, Kols say that after the marriage festivities the families 585] concerned must not eat without first making an offering to Dulha *deo*. The main offering should be a male pig, which is offered to him, then cooked before the shrine and eaten sacramentally. The bones and pieces that are left are buried in a hole in the floor of the house, for if they should be thrown out or exposed trouble would result.

Gwalbansa baba. This deity is another household god of the same type as Dulha *deo*. He is said to be the master of the house and is always worshipped within the dwelling. He is particularly propitiated at *Jawara* time when an animal offering, preferably a goat or pig, is sacrificed inside the house. The blood is sprinkled about the [264 niche in the wall down near the floor which had been freshly plastered. Nothing whatsoever of the slain animal should be allowed to go out-

1 *Ibid.*, pp. 100, 101.

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He is given offerings of foods and vegetables and the hen offering is always acceptable. Because he is in the form of an animal, he should never be given an animal sacrifice. Among Hindus, Hanuman is also worshipped by the Vaishnavite sect which does not offer animal sacrifices. According to some Kols, Tuesday is the best day to offer Mahabir his sacrifices and these are offered only by men. The cocoanuts and foods offered and placed before him are, after prayer, taken up and distributed among the worshippers present. Some said that Mahabir is displeased if anyone should be worshipped before him. He has supreme control over all *devis* and *deotas*, and they have no power over him nor can they touch him. Therefore they worship him first. It was only one group that made this surprising claim.

Mansa deo. Mansa *deo* is also a household god, but is usually worshipped outside the house. A small platform of mud is raised by the wall just in front of the house, and on the wall some daubs (usually four) of *sendur* are put, and two small red flags are set up. Some ashes will often be found there and bangles, beads, and the like. If Mansa *deo* is not kept contented by the usual offerings of food and cocoanuts, he may attack the family. When he is happy, he wards off evil spirits.

Nanga baba. This word means "Naked Father," and the Barela Kols believe that he lives in the hills just above that town. He is greatly respected for his purity and plainness of life. His main task is that of stone sculpturing. Many of the oddities of geology about Barela are ascribed to him and his work, and some of the stones which he is said to have cut up, smoothed and flattened are used today for the building of bridges. Nanga *baba* fashioned them, they believe.

Sannyasi deo. This god is usually found associated with the village shrine. Probably he is the spirit of an ascetic of some kind, now elevated to the place of a *deota*. He is offered cocoanuts and tobacco, and protects people. The offering of tobacco probably confirms the conjecture that he was once a wandering *sadhu*. At the time of the *bawa* if he should enter and possess a devotee, the person possessed will reveal the presence of Sannyasi by taking up the iron tongs kept at the shrine and beating and pinching himself with them. To do this is a sure sign that Sannyasi *deo* has come and is truly present.

All of these deities are known to the masses of the people in Central India, and are propitiated from two points of view. This has been aptly described as "spirit scaring" and "spirit squaring."[1] If

1 Enthoven, R. E., *Folklore of Bombay*, p. 14.

2 [i.e., Mahabir or Hanuman.]

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793 787 *The Selection of the Panda.* One old *panda* described to us how his son had been selected to be his successor and had even begun to assume some of the duties before the father had to give them up. When the old man wanted to know who would be his successor, he went with his son to the village shrine, and they prostrated themselves on the plastered courtyard before the *devi*. It was at *Jawara* time, when the *devis* are most active, and he told the *devi* (Khermai in this case) that he had a request to make of her; would she hear? He waited until he felt, by strange movings of his hair that she was present and listening, and then asked if she would have his son for her *panda*. He says that he became unconscious, and while in that state Khermai spoke through him to the people present to say that she was willing to have his son as her priest. When he came out of his trance he found that his son was also possessed of Khermai and that he was shaking and shivering and uttering the strange cries which are characteristic of one so enchanted. This was, he says, the confirmation of the *devi's* willingness to have him, and she had even then possessed him. From now on the son could not be considered as merely an assistant, for he was a *panda* who would soon take over all the work of the shrine. We did not see the son, who at the moment was working in the Cement factory at Kymore, digging up stone. But since that first time, the son had often been possessed of the *devis*, and on each occasion he had named the *devi* commanding him at that moment. He makes regular offerings to the *devis*.

If the *panda* has no sons, the selection is from a group of likely young men, or the community may simply join up with another village. A few weeks after the *panda's* death, the village elders gather in the evening at the shrine and begin to play the drum and [781] sing songs of the *bhagat* type. As the evening wears on and the insistent throbbing of the drums becomes more strident, an emotional excitement spreads over some of them. It may centre on one of the players, or on another who is singing, or yet on another seated there. This is a manifestation of the presence of the *devi*, and those who feel the *bawa* coming upon them should go before the village shrine. It 793 may be that one of those present is particularly affected; he may 787 shout, scream, beat himself upon the ground, lash himself with a barbed 785 iron lash to be found at the shrine, or he may put on the spiked sandals and jump about. Whoever thus shows that he is supremely possessed is marked out as the successor of the deceased *panda*.

If, however, the interested onlookers cannot agree that it is genuine, and if there should be more than one candidate in that state, there will have to be even more extreme tests. One of these is to thrust

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the point of an iron trident through the cheek or tongue or part of the skin of the neck, and ask the "candidate" to jump and run about with it in place. This is the final test, as it were, of the validity of the claim to be a Kol priest. Further on is a fuller description of the phenomenon of the *bawa*.[1]

Duties of the Priest. The duties of the priest are largely connected with the village shrine. He should keep it in order, offer the cocoanuts and animals, and perform the *hom* sacrifice. He is also the mouthpiece of the goddess. When possessed of the *devi* he is asked questions, and the answers that come from his mouth are not his, but are claimed to be the answers of the *devi* herself.

It is not infrequent that the *panda* is also expected to perform certain magical practices, although he is not as expert in these as the Baiga priest is believed to be. These practices are usually in connection with disease, but it may be any form of divination known to Kols. A child is ill, and the priest is asked for his help in healing the disease. The priest will go before the *devi* and vow to take no food for nine days, and after that to make a *jawara* offering. An earthen *ghara*, wheat and milk are given him. These he takes to the child's house and plants the wheat in the *ghara*. Sometimes this is done in his own house. The wheat is sprinkled daily with water and a little milk. It sprouts and grows, and in nine days, after being taken with ceremony to the village tank or a near-by stream, the earth is washed away. The wheat plants and the roots are then brought back to the house where the child is ill. If by this time the spirit causing the illness has not been satisfied, the wheat stalks and roots will surely satisfy her if left on the roof to dry. Like the stalks, the disease will dry up and disappear.

THE VILLAGE SHRINE. It was noted that each village has its central shrine. This, however, is not the only shrine in the village; there may also be other ones, but there is one which is recognized as the chief place of worship, and it is about this central shrine that the chief religious observances centre. The place of worship is a sanctuary of a god or goddess and not the place of public congregational worship. The pictures on plate xxiv show village shrines, and a ground plan in figure 26 is also given to show the disposition and arrangement of the various concomitants. Some shrines have more in them than others, and frequently a red *sendur* mark and cocoanut shells and ashes are the only sign that worship is carried on there. Hindu influences may be presumed.

1 See p. 159.

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are very common. The trident with the sharp point is used at the time the *panda* or another is possessed of Khermai, and is pierced through the tongue or cheek.

3. *Spiked Sandals* (*Kharau*). Every well-equipped shrine should have at least one pair of spiked sandals. These are made of pieces of wood in the shape of the sole of a shoe with sharp spikes driven through so that the person walking on them stands on the points. There is a wooden peg toward the front of each which fits between the big toe and the next and holds the sandal on the foot. These are generally used at the time of the trance. When the spirit of Kalimai possesses a man, it will be evidenced by his desire to put on these sandals and jump about in them.

4. *Iron Tongs* (*Chimta*). There is also another kind of iron instrument found in these shrines: iron tongs used for taking coals out of the fire. When Sannyasi *deo* comes upon a man he will take the tongs and beat himself with them. Hindu ascetics usually carry tongs.

5. *Iron Lash* (*Gurda*). This is a sort of magic chain made of iron links barbed with bits of steel. The handle by which it is grasped is also iron. During the *baus*, if one is possessed (particularly by Bhuiyan *deo*), he will pick up this chain and lash himself till the blood comes. If some person, possessed of an evil spirit, is brought before the shrine, and the *panda* in his trance recognizes the reality of the spirit possession, he will attempt to cast out the spirit by lashing the unfortunate man.

6. *Iron Nails*. Some bits of iron or iron nails are usually found somewhere about the shrine. These serve a dual purpose: they are tests for Khermai, and one possessed of her can stick them into his flesh without pain or discomfort. They are also used to frighten away evil spirits who may make a disturbance, and are sometimes flung in their direction causing them to fly away.

7. *A Bed of Spikes* (*Palna*). Often a bed of spikes is found in connection with these shrines. This too is to test spirit possession. One possessed of Kali will seek to use the bed of spikes.

8. *A Ram's Horn* is sometimes found. It is lucky to have one and it protects the shrine.

9. *Clay Lamps* (*Dip*). Clay dishes into which oil is poured and wicks attached are also found at all shrines. Sweet oil and incense are mixed, and during the time of worship two or three of these are lighted and kept burning. The *panda* lights and cares for them.

10. *Ashes* (*Rakha*). A pile of ashes is always found somewhere about the shrine. This is a good protective device against evil spirits.

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778 782 [824] such seem to be the case, a piece of lemon may be thrown well away from the shrine. The evil spirit will go after it, forgetting all about what is going on at the shrine. Such spirits are easily outwitted in this manner.

Foods offered include almost all kinds cooked in *ghi*: *puris*, *khichri* and various sweets. *Ghi* itself is frequently put about.

[825] Animals which make acceptable offerings include the chicken, goat, pig and sheep. The latter is very expensive and is not often resorted to. The mature goat or pig is almost never sacrificed—young ones are preferred by the *devis*. Usually a *devi* desires a female of the species offered, and a *deota* a male. The animal to be sacrificed is brought before the shrine, having been first washed and marked with *sendur*. Its throat is cut with an iron knife and the blood is sprinkled directly before the symbols, or at the foot of the tree where the little flags are located. Sometimes the animal is decapitated with a single blow, and only the head is taken on the platform, and blood from it [262 264] dropped over the symbols. The animal is then cleaned, cooked and eaten beside the shrine, and the people partake of a ceremonial meal together. The bones and bits left over are carefully gathered and taken away, either by some low-caste Hindu who may be around, or by some Kol who takes them outside the village boundary and [435] deposits them in a *nala* or place where water is likely to flow. The kid or suckling pig costs from one to three rupees each depending upon the size. Kols never raise pigs and so have to buy them. Goats, [231] however, are often kept and are generally available. The kind and size of animal offered usually depends on the economic condition of the worshipper. It is also said that when a man desires to make an [787 793] offering, he will pray that in a dream the kind of offering he should make may be revealed to him. A *panda's* advice is also sought.

Some deities are said to have particular preferences regarding [776 822] the colour of the animal sacrificed. The Kols are far from consistent, but generally for Kali or Kalika, the colour should be black. Khermai generally prefers white and Marimai red. Most of the *devis* are not very discriminating.

776 778 782 Kols make these offerings in order to protect themselves from the troubles, diseases and miseries of life. Possibly they will lead the deities to be merciful. They are promised that if all goes well they will receive sacrifices and offerings regularly. If offered properly, these sacrifices are thought to bind the deity and practically force her to do as the worshipper desires. The people are thus psychologically confident of a good outcome. If the deities are kept pleased and happy

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in this way, all is well; but if they get angry, they will trouble the people who have neglected them.

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THE HOME SHRINE. Shrines found at the homes are much simpler than the village shrines and are found either inside or just outside the house, or in both places. Those outside the house are placed in the front wall facing the courtyard, and the wall of the house is a part of the shrine. Sometimes a little hole is made in the wall to shelter the *devi* when it rains. These shrines may be dedicated to any of the *devis* mentioned in the preceding pages—Asmanimai, Kalimai, Khermai, Marimai and Shardamai being the most commonly worshipped outside the house. One finds flags above, and also below; the iron trident; black and other kinds of bangles; a *salagrama* stone; *sendur* marks and the like. Iron lashes and strings of beads are not uncommon.

The place reserved within the dwelling for the household goddess, or god is even simpler. There is a niche in the wall from four to six inches above the floor. Within the niche is found a *salagrama* stone [386] or some iron symbol reddened with *sendur*. Vermilion is also daubed on the wall round the niche. The floor space immediately below the [237] deity is plastered with cowdung. A small trident usually leans against the wall at one side of the shrine; there is a *dip* which is [782] lighted at dusk, when the women of the house prostrate themselves before the shrine. As was noted, both kinds of shrines are usually found. If the house is just a hut of branches, and there is no earthen wall, symbols of the deities will be found on the floor in one of the corners. The house shrine is generally called *dewghar* or *dewala*.

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DEVI POSSESSION. (*Bawa*). The phenomenon of spirit possession is fairly common among certain of the lower classes. The Kols also practise this. The trance occurs before the village shrine and is usually induced only at the time of the *Jawara* festivals, which come at the spring and autumnal equinox. It may be resorted to on other occasions if there seems to be a case of extreme necessity. The actual [533] trance is induced partly by the singing and the beating of drums, at which Kols are so adept. The person seeking the *bawa* takes his place before the *devi* and after a period of concentration and emotion begins to tremble, then shout, beat himself upon the ground, and becomes in appearance a totally different person. During this time he will answer questions put to him by persons seeking guidance, who believe that it is not he that is answering them, but the spirit at that time resident in him. During [151] this period, the one under the possession of the *devi* is practically insen-

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787 [151] sible to pain, and very painful things may be resorted to without any apparent sensation on his part. Some drug may be partly responsible.

There are cerain tests as to whether a person is truly possessed of the *devi* or not. The following are tests Kols have given.

1. A trembling and jerking of the head and limbs.
2. A state of semi-consciousness. He is clearly not himself, but is able to recognise the people who stand about him and ask him questions.
3. The uttering of the magic words: "oohha, oohha." No meanings could be given for this, but it represents a gasping effort.[1]
4. The uttering of other unintelligible words and phrases.
5. The ability to walk and jump about on spiked sandals without evidence of pain or discomfort. 787 785
6. The lashing of the back with the iron lash until it is raw and bleeding.
7. The passing of the point of the trident through the tongue, cheek, or the skin of the neck and leaving it there from a half hour to two hours. During this time the person may move about, and if it is not through his tongue, may answer questions. This is said to be the supreme [757] test. It is claimed that no sores or bleeding follow it and that it is treated by a mixture of ashes, *ghi*, *pan* and lime juice.

787 It is not held that all of these must concur to give adequate proof; and though often they do not go as far as really wounding themselves, the *bawa* is still regarded as a genuine one.

If two men, for instance, should be possessed at the same time by different *devis*, there may be a contest between those particular *devis* should there be any enmity between them. One may try to defeat the other, and the result is a fight between the men.

Kol women are also said to have the *bawa*, but with them this phenomenon is not nearly so common. It is taken as a sign that the deity is pleased with them.

During the time of the *bawa*, people come seeking guidance and help for their troubles: childless women ask what offerings they should give in order that they may bear children; domestic troubles are told and their solution asked for; illness, lack of work and the like, are all brought before the *devi*, and an answer is forthcoming.

787 171 564 Following is a description of a *bawa* seen by the author. It was a Domar *bawa*, not a Kol one, but Indians familiar with Kol *bawas* said that it was not essentially different. The *bawa* was performed under abnormal circumstances: it was not done before a regular shrine, but one improvised against a telephone pole.

The assistant first cleared a spot of grass making a bare area about two feet wide and three feet long. The one who was to perform then came and poured a little water over the spot, rubbed the earth

[1] It may be connected with the name *OJHA* or "medicine man".

A [i.e., a low caste Hindu.—Analyst]

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and smoothed it. This was to take the place of plastering. When this was done, he set in place the articles that were brought along for the ceremony. These included a cocoanut, some flowers, *sendur* powder, *ghi*, camphor balls, an iron ring, sweet oil, some bits of iron, a bottle of country liquor, and two limes. Some burning charcoal was brought from a house nearby. There was a group who had come to sing and play the drums. A song or two was sung while preparations were being made.

The *sendur* was mixed with *ghi* to form a paste, some of which was daubed on the pole immediately back of the cleared spot, also some on the *panda's* forehead and upper arms. On the left arm three dauba, and on the right arm two. A sort of trident was also marked on the telephone pole with the *sendur*. Next the coals were handed him, and were placed within the iron ring. The lamp with the sweet oil was lit, after a cotton wick had been rolled for it by hand. The bottle of country liquor was opened and some poured out to the left of the cocoanut which was leaning against the base of the pole. As he poured the *panda* muttered charms, held the lamp above the cocoanut for a few moments, then set it down before it. Next a few cloves were taken and after having been put to his lips, stuck into the ground about him and into his loin cloth. From the vessel containing *ghi* he took a few drops and let them fall on the glowing charcoal, which flamed up and gave off the incense of burning butter. He uttered the word "Ramchandra", and some other incantations, and more *ghi* was dropped on the fire. One of the limes was then cut with a knife into two pieces and placed to the right and the left of the burning *ghi* in the iron ring. The singing now began in real earnest. The camphor balls were next set afire and put on top of the cut limes. Everything was apparently ready for the coming of the *devi*. He turned around to the group and hailed them as if taking farewell, and with folded hands began to meditate, looking steadily upward at the electric light which had been fastened to the pole, for it was about eight p.m. As he did this, his assistant, who happened to be his brother, began angrily to address someone in the unseen world and looked toward the south as he called. Before long one could notice that the man's arms were beginning to quiver. The music became more strident and the man began to shake his head while his whole body swayed from side to side. He drew in his abdomen and stuck out his chest repeatedly. He picked up a rope lash and lashed his own back. Then the assistant with a loud tone and a hard look invoked Kali, saying, "*Kali Calcuttawali hajir ho*": 'Kali of Calcutta be here'! Then it seemed that the spirit came upon him for the first

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time, as he began to jerk with great spasms, jumped up in a frenzy, screamed and shouted. The assistant then showed his brother a rupee and challenged Kali to show herself in her best possible form and then put the rupee beside the fire. This brought on a very wild period of shouting and falling to the earth and of beating himself with the lash. His tense face was that of another, and his eyes were glassy. He kept his tongue stuck out in imitation of Kali whose representations always show her with outstretched tongue. He also held out his hands as Kali does in her pictures. His writhings and tremblings now ceased, and he asked in a harsh voice if anyone wanted to ask advice of her, for he had become Kalimai. One of the Hindu women living on the compound came forward and asked why she had no children. She crawled up to him on hands and feet, and had her forehead on the ground. The goddess answered through the man possessed, that she had no issue because her mind was polluted, and charged her to worship her (Kali) or worship Bhagawan. He then took some ashes from the coals of the fire and throwing them upon her announced that she would have an issue within ten years.

A man came forward and asked the best method of worship. The answer was very indefinite: if he worshipped, he would be prosperous. Then he became very excited and swaying and looking fiercely at the questioner said in indignation: "You have come to test me, but haven't I done many things for you? Tell me the truth, haven't I done much for you?" The man became so excited that he was hissing and beating himself upon the ground, first with one shoulder then the other, and then in an up-right position, beating his arms. Another came and asked a question, but no attention was paid to him. A woman whose husband had disappeared came humbly crawling towards him. She wanted to know whether her husband was still living and if so where he was. The *devi* answered between broken breaths saying that the husband had left the woman at her own request and that she was thus to blame. The solution given was to "worship me daily for a month and a quarter, give your offerings daily at my temple in the Saddar for a month and a quarter, and for this period abstain from the use of salt in your food. Have your heart clean and you will get your desire." Another woman said that one of her relatives had gone to his country and had not yet returned. Would he come back? The reply was, "He is all right, but his heart has turned away from you. He will return in a few days."

The woman who had asked about her childlessness now asked what kind of an offering she should give to Kali. A wave of frenzy came upon the fellow and he said, "Offer an animal in my name; feed the

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panchayat." He hissed some more, went through a great shaking and again added, "Don't you see my truth? You have called me to test my power, but I am showing you my glory." Turning to the spectators, he demanded if there was anyone else who had a request to make. The assistant then poured out before him on the ground some more of the country liquor. This greatly excited the man who screamed, jumped up and down, and after putting his mouth to the ground several times licked up the liquor in the madness of emotion. Then taking a bit of the lime he squeezed some out on the fire and said, "May all your desires be fulfilled."

The fellow then took up his knife and began to cut the end of the little finger on his right hand. We did not see any blood actually come out. There was more frenzy and hisses, and Kali left him; other goddesses and gods possessed him in turn, and he shouted out the name of the deities as they were coming upon him. He went through certain motions supposed to be characteristic of the deity but these could not always be detected as the scene shifted rapidly. The following deities came upon him in turn; Marhidevi, Hinlag devi, Phulmatimai, Bindabasini, Bhawani, Chausatt (64) Joginis (of Marble Rocks Hill), Sitalamai, Uddan Begni (goddess of Aeroplanes), Asmanidevi (which caused a further writhing), then a long burst of cruel laughter, and the name Manidas which, they said, was the god of the cemetery. More liquor was poured out, and fury again possessed the man. He was covered with perspiration. But the mood immediately changed, and he began to cry and sob like a child. Then rushing backwards and forwards and throwing himself writhing on the ground, he sat up with a triumphant look on his face, beat his arms with his fists and announced that he was Bir Pehalvan, the god of wrestling. Then last of all he changed back into Kali, and soon again made out that he was cutting his little finger, and held it over the fire as if to squeeze out some drops of blood—an offering to the bloody goddess. The musicians did not play all through the performance, but at this point they again took up their drumming and singing and shouted "*Kalimai ki jai*"—Hail to Kali. The chief character then took a bit of ashes and gave to his assistant, who sprinkled them over the singers, at which they shouted "Hail, Marhai Mata, Hail." The man now threw himself on his back and writhed again in seeming agony; then jumped up and forward to the elements; took up the iron ring, poured out *ghi* on the fire, which had been kept going by the assistant; poured some more liquor on the ground, removed the outer covering of the cocoanut and put the pieces in the fire; took the cocoanut in his hands and held it up in worship; then

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broke it upon a stone and separated the kernel, putting a bit of it in the fire. The juice of the remaining lime was squeezed out on the ground, the oil of the lamp was poured out, the knife was stuck into the ground and water sprinkled about seven times as he muttered incantations. Then with a shout he fell back exhausted, where he lay for several minutes before opening his eyes in a sort of stupefied manner. The pieces of cocoanut were then distributed to the singers and players. The man sat up, seemed normal again, and showed his hands, as if to say that the wounds were healed and no ill had befallen him. The group left and went to their homes. We heard later that they got thoroughly intoxicated and had a small pig for a feast. The whole performance lasted approximately an hour.

GODDESS SEPTS. Kols do not worship all the goddesses mentioned in the previous lists, but usually limit themselves to certain of them; they have a certain number which they call their own deities. Usually the son should worship the same number as the father worshipped, but not necessarily the same ones. By way of illustration, the following shows the reaction of five Kols who happened to be talking about this:

1. Three Deities: Shardamai, Kalimai and Barmatimai.
2. Three: Kalki, Phulmati and Sharda.
3. Said he too had three and named those in 2.
4. Four: Phonamuki, Athabhuji, Lorhadhar, Asmani.
5. Seemed much puzzled and said he worshipped several but no particular number.

TREES AND RELIGION. In another place more will be said about Kol beliefs concerning trees.[1] The chief trees thought of in connection with deities are noted here:

The *Nim* (*Melia azadirachta*) is the best tree for the Kol and is considered to be the home of Khermai, although other *devis* also like it.

The *Pipal* tree (*Ficus religiosa*) and the banyan tree (*Ficus indica*) are the home of Baran *deo* and other rather dangerous spirits. At Sehora a giant *danawa* lives in a *pipal* tree.

The Tamarind tree (*Tamarindus indicus*) is a favourite home of the *churel*, a particularly vicious spirit, but is also the abode of Chithra *devi*.

The Banyan tree also shelters Basdeo and Sannyasi.

1. See Chapter IX.

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796 successful the ceremony. Last of all the whole is covered with a layer of dry grass.

[177] [793] [821] The time for the actual lighting is learned from the Hindu *pandit* who knows horoscopy and can tell it exactly. Theoretically the pile should be lighted at full moon, when the sun and the moon are exactly in opposition. This may occur before sunset, and if so, the pile should be lighted as soon as dusk has fallen. It was to be lighted in the case we investigated at 3 a.m. When the hour has come, all who take [522] part in the festivities gather round the sacred pile with much laughing and vulgar jesting. A cocoanut is usually broken just as the fire is touched off. The fire is lit from burning cow dung cakes; and before [237] touched off, it is carried by the *panda* seven times around the pile 372] which is always kept to his right, so that he goes clockwise about it. The glowing cow dung cakes are then inserted into the wood and grass drawn over it, and the fire begins. One should never blow upon this fire to get it started. It should be fanned, but never blown from the mouth. Now the whole group will circumambulate the fire in a clockwise direction, throwing wheat or other gifts into it. Later on, as the fire dies down, some daring youths may jump over it or run through it. As the group goes about the fire, they shout: "*Hori ha, Hori mata*, take thou this wheat our *Hori mata*." *Hori* is used for *Holi*. Singing is kept up all night, and more wood may be thrown upon the fire. [533]

796 With the lighting of the fire, the obscenity of this festival is 786 loosened, and may be resorted to all night and the next day. Obscene 831 songs of the *Kabiri* type in which the sexual act is described with appropriate gestures are sung. These are not directed against any particular individual, and no offense should be taken by anyone. A woman may snatch away a bit of the clothes of a man known to her, such as his cap or *pagri* or cloth flung over his shoulder. He must give her a present before he can recover it, and the hat should be filled with *gur* (raw sugar) and sweets before he can get it back. Sexual license is permitted at this time.

[787] Certain prophecies about the coming harvest are made by observing the way the fire burns, the smoke rises, and how it is carried away by the wind.

On the day following liberties of all kinds are taken with people. Dust, mud, dirt, and water coloured red, are thrown over passers-by. Sugar garlands are exchanged and indecent remarks passed. *Kabiri* [533] songs and others celebrating Krishna's love affairs are sung. The more shameless a lowcaste man can be, the more lustily he is cheered by his companions. There is no redress for those insulted on this

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occasion, as such acts are not considered really reprehensible if done during *Holi*.

Jawara. This is the most important of the festivals observed by the Kols and while linked to Hindu observances, is nevertheless probably a much more primitive affair than many Hindu ceremonies. The *Jawara* festival comes twice a year, in the Spring in the Hindu month of *Chaita* (March-April), and the Fall in the month of *Kunwar* (September-October). The former begins on the first day of the Hindu year in the month *Chaita*, and lasts for nine days ending on *Ramnavami* or the birthday of Rama. In the Fall it comes during the first nine days of *Kunwar* and ends just before *Dasara* on the tenth of *Kunwar*. The Fall festival comes just before the sowing of the winter crop of wheat, and the Spring festival comes just after it. has been reaped.

The *Jawara* festival is entered into by the Kols with great enthusiasm, and it is during this period that the *bawa* or spirit possession is most common. During the nine days of the festival, singing, dancing and the beating of drums are kept up almost incessantly after nightfall.

It is called *Jawara* festival after the *juari* plant, a large millet, *Sorghum vulgare*. As this is not grown to a great extent in Central India, it is more usual to find that wheat rather than *jawar* is used in the ceremonies. On the first day of the nine days' celebration, a room or portion of a room is plastered and made ready for the sowings. A ceremonial bath should be taken first, and the one who plants the wheat should care for it the rest of the nine days. The wheat is then sown in small earthen vessels or sometimes in leaf dishes filled with earth, which is well-manured so that the wheat will grow nicely. It is watered daily and a few drops of milk are sprinkled over it in order to make it grow even better. The water should never be put on the plants directly from the hand, preferably the roots of a barley plant should be dipped into the water and thus it is sprinkled upon the growing plants. The vessels are kept indoors and probably not far from one of the household goddesses. It is said that all Kols do not sow this wheat, only those whose forefathers did so, or perhaps also those who have made some vow before a deity.

During the nine days of this celebration almost all the Kol deities are invoked and worshipped, and there is much singing before the village shrines, and *bawas* are common. The eighth night is the one most likely for a *bawa*, for that night all the people in the village are required to fast. During the nine days, the person caring for the wheat should fast in the evenings. The long stalks have sprung up by this time and are now ready to be taken out.

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796 787 The ninth day is the final day of the *Jawara* festival. The greenish-yellowish wheat can now be brought out and something foretold, in the case of the Fall festival, about the coming crop. If the wheat has grown nicely, in spite of the fact that it has been kept indoors, and in addition frequently covered by a basket, it is a sign that there will be a good crop of wheat. If the growth of the *jawara* is poor, the crop will likely be a poor one. The process appears to [789] have an element of magic in it and is used as a method to secure good crops; for the earth is first well manured and then well cared for and watered. Frazer in his series, "The Golden Bough", has found a similar ritual elsewhere which he calls "The Garden of Adonis."[1]

The growing wheat cannot be taken out before the late afternoon. When the time comes to take it out, some animals are sacrificed at the village shrine, there is singing and dancing and probably there will [480] be a *bawa* with Shardamai as the deity possessing the devotee. The procession is formed at the shrine, and the women carry the plants on their heads to the river or tank where the stalks are immersed. [718] The men folk follow a short distance behind and loudly beat their drums to frighten away any evil influences. The women sing songs [532] of the *bhagat* type and there may be some *bawas* as well, and the de- [185] votee has a trident stuck into his tongue or cheek. Upon reaching the place where the wheat will be "cooled", the women enter the water, and wash away the earth from the roots of the plants. The earthenware vessels are thrown away, and the stalks are retained. Most of [43] them, though not all, are brought back and distributed to friends as [62] a mark of goodwill. They receive from others as well as give. All enmities should be healed.

796 574 That evening there is a feast at the village shrine. The Kols gather by *kurhis* and the animals sacrificed are eaten along with other foods; there is more music and songs and perhaps some more *bawas*. Sometimes the animals are not sacrificed until the procession bringing the stalks of wheat, returns from the tank.

796 *Khajleniya*. This is another term for the Jawara festival and refers especially to the activities of the ninth day, and the part the women play in carrying the wheat stalks. It is therefore spoken of [857] by some Kols as a woman's festival. Along with it there are certain [533] activities for the children. Two sticks are set up to represent a man [535] and a woman, and they dance about the sticks and sing some marriage songs. There is also a test of balance, and a long bamboo pole is [526] placed on the ground, and the boys and girls try to see if they can

1. Frazer, J. G., *The Golden Bough*, Vol. I., p. 236 ff.

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171 789 776 examples are current among low caste Hindus and do not represent the more polished type to be found higher up.

Milk. The use of milk has been mentioned in connection with 272 776 the magic circle. The good spirits like it, and certain evil spirits are 782 passionately fond of it. Milk is scattered over the ashes after the 789 funeral pyre has burnt down. Milk propitiates Nag, the serpent god.

Names. Great care should be exercised in the selection and use 551 of names, as they become a part of one's personality. A good name 789 is also attractive to evil spirits, and if the spirits come to know that a certain child has such a name they may make an attack on the innocent thing. Therefore, call the child by an evil name such as 'fly', 'filth', 'one-eyed', and the spirits will not condescend to notice him. [754] Such names protect in another manner as well. If one gets possession of the name of someone—his real name—he may, through the charms of black magic, work harm to the person concerned. Therefore the child's true name should never be known to people lest they should work ill with it. The use of magic on a false name is ineffective and no harm can come to one.

789 *Noises* of various types are demon-scarers for they dislike noise; [825] hence the beating of drums, the occasional fireworks and other devices, by which loud noises are produced when necessary.

Nuts and Seeds of various kinds are useful. Many Kol children 789 have a *ghata* nut (*Zizyphys xylopyrus?*) tied to a string which is hung 824 somewhere about the person, often on the wrist. Mustard seeds are freely sprinkled about if spirits are expected, and, as in the case of limes, distract their attention. They are scattered round the place where a body is burnt. Black *urad* pulse (*Phaseolus radiatus*) is often [585] used on similar occasions. The *supari* nut (*Areca catechu*) is placed below the sacred pole in the marriage booth and under the foundation stone of the house. These are in this manner protected from evil.

Salt has its magic use among the Kols. It has a preservative 789 power, and this, together with its power over demons, accounts for 263 its being scattered over the place where the dead have been cremated. It should not be put into the food during the period of mourning after [765] a death in the home, and the chief mourner should not use it for a year.

755 *Scapè Animals.* Among Kols there is a belief that an evil spirit ●787 resident in a man may be transferred to an animal and the man thus freed. It is not unusual to bring a man believed to be possessed of 825 a spirit before the shrine together with a chicken or goat, usually the 782 former. The *panda* invokes Khermai amid singing and drumming, or mostly drumming, and there may be a *baiga* along with it. Under

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these conditions the evil spirit is sternly addressed and in the name of Khermai is ordered to leave the person affected and enter the chicken. Upon being satisfied that the transaction has actually occurred there are now two or three ways of dealing with the chicken. The most common procedure is to sacrifice it to Khermai, and as the blood is sprinkled at the base of the shrine she is implored to conduct the evil spirit far away so that it may trouble them no more. The less common method is to take the chicken into the jungle, the further away the better, and loose it there, invoking Khermai to let the spirit be in the chicken as long as the latter lives; then when the chicken dies, never to allow the spirit to be able to find its way back to the village. If the chicken should return alive to the village it would mean that the spirit would also re-enter and harm someone.

Supa. The *supa* or winnowing fan is a great protective and has many magical uses. The new-born infant is laid in it and no evil spirit will dare touch him there. It is used in various wave ceremonies, notably during the wedding cycle. It is used to cast out demons and to detect demon possession.

Tattooing has its protective value and in an earlier section this was discussed. It was noted that it protected against disease and aided in the necessary household activities.[1]

Threads, red or black in colour, are useful about the neck. This applies particularly to the child, but the adult often has one somewhere on his person. At *Rakshabandan* time the opposite sexes tie threads on members of the family. Threads are used in connection with the marriage of trees and a thread is wrapped seven times around the marriage pole. Threads are often knotted to afford further protection.

Thorns. Thorns afford great trouble to the spirits. They are put over the bodies of the deceased in the graves and are often put about the houses, where they serve the dual purpose of keeping off both beast and spirit. They are used in magical practices, so that when a jackal crosses the road a pile of thorns should be set up, a stone put in the centre, and with one's foot placed on the stone the jackal should be roundly cursed.

Trees and Plants. Any tree associated with the gods is holy and keeps away evil powers and influences. A *charpai* or cot of *nim* wood is very useful as it protects one when he is helpless in his sleep. Some *nim* (*Melia azadirachta*) should always be placed in the lying-

1. See pp. 29-31.

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from the tin or the bottle, around the whole or part of the village. The *hom* sacrifice should be made by each household, and following the whole procedure, animals may be sacrificed at the village shrine, and a feast enjoyed by all.

TESTS FOR EVIL SPIRITS. It was said by Kols that there are certain obvious evidences of spirit possession. Mental cases are attributed to evil spirits as are cases of paralysis and the like. If one acts irrationally it is taken for granted that he is possessed and efforts should be made to free him.

Sometimes it is not quite so easy to tell whether an evil spirit is really about, or whether he should be blamed for the misfortune under consideration. If a man has a disease which defies treatment, and if he is wasting away, it may be that he has an evil spirit working in him. To determine for certain there are some tests which may be made. Among them are the following:

On the floor of the room, in which the man lies ill, a circle made with wheat flour is marked out, and in the centre of the circle an earthenware lamp is placed. Grains of wheat and *urad* pulse are carefully counted and put in a particular position and sequence. The Baiga or *panda*, as the case may be, then pronounces some *mantras* over them and the room is left to the ill man for the rest of the night. In the morning the grains are counted again and their positions carefully checked, and the ring of flour is examined for any marks or indications of having been disturbed. If there are signs of a disturbance of any kind, or if there are missing grains, it is a sure proof that an evil spirit has been about and has meddled with those articles. Of course, it is difficult to believe that any disturbance could not have taken place with mice and rats everywhere in abundance.

A second method is based upon the use of limes. It will be recalled that spirits are very fond of this kind of fruit and greedily attack them. Several limes are therefore taken, and a large number of sharp needles stuck into each, perhaps as many as twenty-five. These limes are then placed in a position where a spirit, were it to come into the room, would be sure to notice them. In the morning these are again carefully examined, the needles pulled out, or the limes broken and the needles inspected. If there should be a drop of blood on any of the needles the spirit has been there. It would have seen the lime, snatched at it greedily without observing the needles imbedded in it and been pricked by their sharp points. Any formation of rust would be interpreted as blood and be the indication of the presence of a spirit.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

In a "yellow skin disease", probably a form of jaundice, the following procedure may be pursued: One should take some *til* oil and pour it into a brass *lota*. A sickle or knife is waved over this to frighten off any influences which might affect the magical powers resulting from the act to be performed. When it is believed that all the spirits have passed from the region of the cup, the sick man is asked to gaze into the oil and catch his reflection. If he can do this, the disease enters the oil in the cup and may be thrown out, no longer to work harm on the person concerned. 755

LUCK AND OMENS. There are auspicious and inauspicious days to be observed and taken into account. In the Hindu month there are five unlucky days which, however, vary from month to month; and the Kol, if he cares to, can find these out by consulting a *pandit*. Nothing new should be started on those days, nor a journey begun, nor any wedding preparations undertaken. Some days of the week are more auspicious than others. Kols believe the best days to be, in the order of their merit; Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. Tuesday, Friday and Sunday are the least desirable, but these days are not really bad, it is usually added, but just inauspicious. On Sunday, for example, discussions should be avoided, as such are likely to become heated and quarrels ensue. 777 [177] [531]

Omens should be taken into account, particularly when any new work is being started, as well as during the marriage preparations and at the beginning of a journey. Often a Kol sets forth on a trip to town and returns home not long after he has started. He probably came across some inauspicious happenings, and if the trip should be of a doubtful nature, and he does not quite understand its significance, he will be on the lookout for all kinds of omens. Kols have often promised to come to our stopping places and discuss matters with us, but they have failed to show up. The reason probably lay in the fact that they could not quite figure out why we wanted them, even though we thought we made it clear, and as they started out some omens presented themselves—omens which they probably would never have noted on ordinary occasions, and so they remained at home. 787

Among good omens the following may be named:

Passing four people seated together.
Meeting a Brahmin just as one starts out.
Passing a vessel filled with water or grain.
Observing a burning lamp by the wayside.
Seeing a woman carrying a healthy male child.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

787 Opening his eyes in the morning and seeing a cow, or observing a cow before he gets up.
Coming across the roller bird (*Coracias indica*).

Bad omens include:
Meeting a person carrying an empty vessel of any kind.
Seeing some newly broken pots the first thing after stepping out of the house in the morning.
Meeting a *teli*, or member of the oil-making caste; but if he smiles so that his teeth are seen, it is all right.
Involuntary sneezing just as one is starting out anywhere.
Observing a dead body either being carried or just lying by the roadside, as in the case of an animal.
To see a jackal crossing the road from either direction.
To meet any deformed person.
To hear an ass braying or a dog howling.
To be startled by the sudden falling of a branch or tree.
The bark of a fox at night means a death in the village before dawn.
To see a crow sitting on the back of a pig or on a man's head.

787 714 828 513 SLEEP AND DREAMS. Animistic tribes and castes pay close attention to dreams. Kols believe that dreams are evidence that souls wander about over the earth during the hours that one is unconscious in sleep. The soul may then wander far and wide, but no one is ever really able to trace its movements. In a split second it can go great distances and is in no way limited by space. And yet, though the soul wanders about, it does not entirely sever its connection with the body, else the person dreaming would die. Kols believe that a thin thread something like a telegraph wire always connects the two. The soul, even though it is far from the body, is still conscious of what is going on at the house as long as this connection is not tampered with.

During the period when a soul is wandering here and there it may be attacked by an evil spirit. This attack is made known to the body through the thin thread, and the result is that the body talks, groans and shouts in its sleep, the intensity depending upon the seriousness of the attack. At such a time the person should be awakened, though not too suddenly, for this will force the soul to return and the possibility of its being injured will be avoided. If the sleeper should not be wakened, the spirit will return eventually, but will doubtless be injured, perhaps fatally.

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A sleeper should never be awakened rudely or directly, for to do so is dangerous to him and may bring a curse upon the person awakening him. If it is found necessary to awaken another person a noise should be made from a distance and should gradually be increased. This gives the soul time to get back. Kols believe that if one dies in his sleep it may be due to the spirit being overcome by a demon and the thin cord connecting the two being broken. A man awakened suddenly may also collapse due to the fact that the one awakening him did so before the spirit had time to return to the body and his connections were cut off.

Dreams are good and bad, not merely in the sense of being pleasant or unpleasant, but their significance is either favourable or unfavourable. It is good to dream of elephants, Kols say, and of meeting relatives. Dances are welcomed as a part of a dream by some Kols, and others do not attach a good significance to them for they believe somewhat in opposites. Weeping, for example, is good for it means that happiness will come, and to dream of copper coins (the cheapest) is a sure sign that one will get silver ones. To dream of a death is also good, for it means that some one who is ill will soon be well. But it is bad to dream of a dead body or of wood or clay, for these things indicate that there will be a death in the family. Happy experiences in dreams may really mean that tragedies are ahead, and so to dream of a wedding or a hearty laugh is not good. While a dream of copper portends riches, to dream of gold or silver jewels and ornaments, has the opposite significance. To dream of snakes or fish is also a bad omen.

We asked a number of Kols whether they ever dreamed that they were flying, but none ever had.[1] One said that he had often dreamed of riding a bicycle, though in actual life he had never ridden on one. Another Kol, working in a lime kiln, described a dream in which he went to the house of the superintendent of the kilns and when he entered he found everything he had ever wanted to eat all spread out on the table before him. He said that while in his dream it made him happy, he nevertheless knew that it probably meant that he would be hungry before long.

The gods and goddesses often reveal through dreams the kinds of gifts and sacrifices they would like Kols to give to them. If a *devi* should appear in a dream and demand a chicken or another animal, it would be necessary for the person to offer this. Sometimes the *devi* is asked at the shrine to reveal her will to the person in a dream.

1 Elwin records dreams of flying among the Baigas. *Op. Cit.*, p. 413.